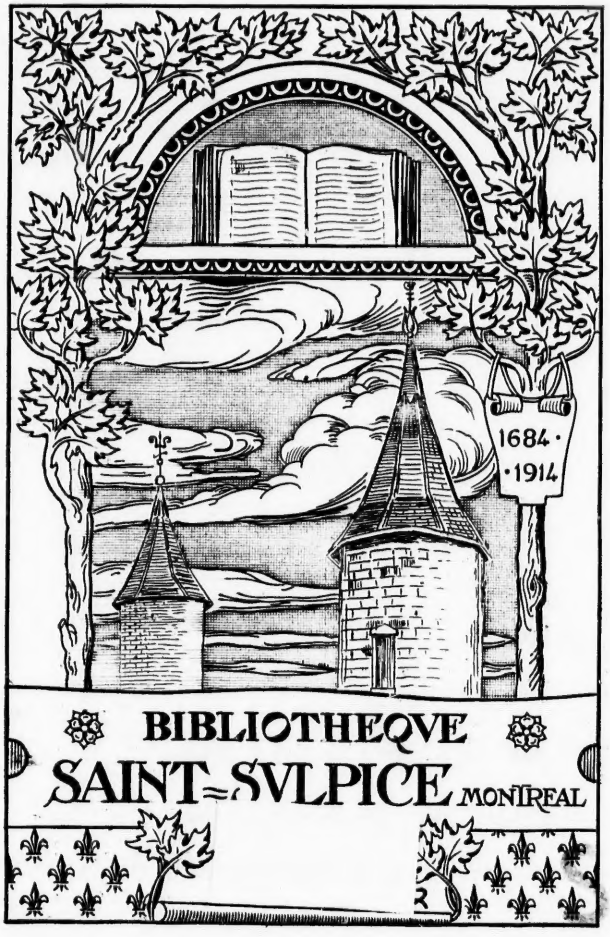
1684·
·1914
BIBLIOTHEQVE
SAINT-SVLPICE MONTREAL

LETTER

TO MR. CLARK BENTOM.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE
SAINT-SULPICE

RES
AD
84
E4-2
[5

SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION

TO MR. CLARK BENTOM.

SIR,

I HAVE just perused a Pamphlet intituled " A statement of Facts and law, relative to the Prosecution of the Revd. CLARK BENTOM," to which your name is prefixed as the Author. This Publication is so full of invective and indiscriminate abuse, and abounds so much with ill founded and malevolent censure, so far as respects me, that however much I might allow it to pass to that *blessed oblivion* to which all your works hasten, I cannot permit it to escape without observation.

You accuse me, Mr. Bentom, of deserting your cause, and of disobedience to your orders in not fyling a Plea for you, after I had engaged to do so. I may ask you as a man of sense, why did you resort to me for advice? If it were for no other purpose than to follow your own, you might, without consulting me, have pursued the dictates of your own superior understanding.

145752

Recollect yourself, Sir, and if you have candour (which I suspect you have not) you will acquit me of any disregard to your interests. I told you, when you first consulted me, that the information against you in the nature of *Quo Warranto* was novel in the annals of Law Proceedings in this Country; that as your interest, and the question of Religious toleration, was involved in the iſſue of the Prosecution, I thought it prudent to defer fyling a Plea, till I had given your case that consideration its importance merited. I never as you falsly aſſert, moved for the business to lye over till another Session.

Was there any thing in this conduct, Sir, which could authorise you as a *Minister*, and a *Christian Preacher of the Gospel* of *Jesus Christ*, (as you call yourself) to accuse me of want of *integrity* and *modesty*? of deserting your cause, and abandoning your *two suffering companions, religious liberty, and the Constitution of the Country?*

If these are your companions, which the world doubt, indeed, Mr. Bentom, you are enobled by them, but I fear they are disgraced by you. You say that you were under the necessity of employing one of the honest lawyers of Canada, and you applied to me:

Lawyers, I must tell you, are as other men, not free from

from the frailties and imperfections of human nature, but they do not, like you, Sir, add *hypocrisy* to the catalogue of their vices.

You are ignorant, you say, of the *Arcana of Law Rectitude*; and after this confession, was it not presumptuous in you to ascribe false motives to the Court in all its proceedings? You forget that my conduct was approved of by the Court, in not hastening on your prosecution as, the Court obſerved, it *involved* a *question of constitutional importance*. Did this discover a disposition in the Court to do you an injustice?

I ask you, who have *the Constitution and Religious Liberty on your lips*, (1) was it decent, constitutional, or praise worthy, to animadvert on the conduct of a Court of Justice during the dependance of a prosecution, and endeavour to overawe its judgement, by publishing, a *partial* and *false* statement of its proceedings? This is the way to trample under foot both *Constitution and Religious liberty*, of which you declare yourself the Champion.

You

---

(1) These catch words, *Constitution and Religious liberty*, which are so continually upon Mr. Bentom's tongue, remind us of Swift's lines on Judge Whitshed:

> *Libertas, et natale solum:*
> Fine words! I wonder where you stole 'em.
> Could nothing, but thy chief reproach,
> Serve for a motto on thy coach?

You should have waited, Sir, the event of your trial before you had imputed to every one the charge of having perfecuted you; and if it had been a persecution, even to death, you would have had the consolation like your Predeceffor *JOHN ZISCA*, to order your skin to be flead, and a drum to be made of it, to carry into the Field against your enemies.

The burden of your fong is that you are *persecuted*, and this favourite idea clings to your heart. It is this your pious muse invokes, and to be considered as a *persecuted man*, is the darling object of all your hopes and wishes. Like Sir John Brute, "every thing you see, every thing you hear, every thing you smell, and every thing you taste," has *persecution* in it. But Sir, has not Government a right to know by what authority you exercise a *Civil office*, and one too, that is the most important which can be exercised in society?

I have alwise considered you, Mr. Bentom, as too insignificant a creature to be the object of Persecution, and I lament, even in appearance, you should be so far lifted up into public notice as to pass with the ignorant as a persecuted man. You remind me of the Dwarf Jeffery, in the time of Charles Ift, who was pulled out of the pocket of the Giant, and exposed for a moment to Public attention.

Be

Be assured of it, the Public, at leaſt the sensible part of it, ſee you in your real character, stripped of that robe of sanctity which you have thrown around you, and that they have now before their eyes the *Wolf in sheep's cloathing*.

May I ask you, Sir, whoſe presumption and vain glory have (in your own eyes,) placed you in a walk of religion and virtue above other men, if no mean and sorded views have induced you to seek applause, at the expence of the reputation of others; and of Characters in high estimation for public and private virtues;

——— spargere voces
In vulgum ambiguas?

Have you no *itching palm*? Do you not expect to raise yourself in the estimation of the society, of which you are an unworthy member, by holding yourself out as a persecuted man? Do you not expect by such means to lay contributions on the faithful? *Commune with your own heart*, Mr. Bentom, and see whether ambition, avarice, vanity, self-love, envy, want of charity do not occupy a considerable part in it? Do you entertain no levelling and disorganising thought, no disloyal sentiment? If your conscience acquit you of these, the world, Mr. Bentom, do you an irreparable injustice.

One word more, honest Parson Bentom, and I have done

done with you. Repress, I beseech you, those tumultuous passions which lead you " whithersoever they list," and seek that humility, meekness, patience, charity, which can alone give you a claim to the appellation of an *Apostle* of Jesus-Christ, which you have profanely assumed. (2) Endeavour to practise, in the inspired language of St. Paul, " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things " are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things " are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; If " there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on " these things."

Think not, Sir, because I have added the shades to the picture you have drawn of yourself, (3) that I am not your friend. I recollect what Tacitus says, and as you

(2) Whoever will take the trouble to turn up to the XLI. chap. of Isaiah, verses 14 and 15, and compare these with the passage in the title page of the " Statement," will observe how much Mr. Bentom has garbled and transposed these verses to answer his own purposes, and turn the Prophet into ridicule. Pope justly considers Isaiah as the most inspired and most sublime of all the sacred writers. His Messiah opens with this beautiful invocation:

" O thou my voice inspire
" Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire."

Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, or any of the primitive Reformers, would have thought it profanity to mutilate and transpose a passage in the Holy Scripture to make a pun or play upon words of it. It was for the unhallowed hands of Clark Bentom, " Gentleman or no Gentleman," to cut the Prophet into shreds and patches, and to join them together in a fantastical way, to indulge his malice.

Does he in this resemble an Apostle?

(3) This will remind many of my readers of the honest Publican Sir Roger de Coverley's tenant, who to shew his attachment to the good Knight, got a picture of him drawn, and hung it up for his sign Post. Sir Roger, with great modesty, desired him to pull it down, and

you are a scholar, Mr. Bentom, you have read him, "Pessimum genus inimicorum laudantes." I have therefore held "the mirror up to nature." (4)

I am, Sir, your devoted

Humble Servant.

J. KER.

Quebec, 21st March, 1804.

---

the honest Publican by adding a pair of whiskers to Sir Roger, past him off as a *Saracen's head.*

If any of the Faithful should shew so great an attachment to Clark Bentom, as to hang up his picture for their sign post, and the Parson had equal modesty with Sir Roger (which it is feared he has not) the likeness could with a dash of the pencil be turned into a *Turk's*, a *Saracen's* or a *Mameluke's head.*

(4) Mr. Bentom has read Gulliver's Travels, and has no doubt perused another part of the joint production of Swift, Pope, and Arbuthnot. "The memoirs of P. P. Clerk of this Parish," in which P. P. shews the *great importance of a man to himself.*

BIBLIOTECA CENTRALE

J. Neilson, Pr. Mt. Street, Quebec.